

PATENT
Application Serial No. 09/261,017

CLEAN COPY OF THE ABSTRACT AS AMENDED:

-- A communications system comprises a central unit (101) and terminals (102, 103, 104). It is equipped so as to establish and maintain a signaling connection between the central unit and at least one terminal using one of at least two alternative signaling protocols. To that end it comprises in the central unit a device for indicating to a terminal the signaling protocols supported by the central unit, and a device for setting up via the central unit's network interface a signaling connection between the central unit's signaling unit and the terminal, using a selected signaling protocol. Correspondingly, in the terminal the system comprises a device for indicating to the central unit the signaling protocol supported by the terminal in response to a message sent by the central unit as well as a device for setting up via the terminal's network interface a signaling connection between the terminal's signaling unit and the central unit, using a protocol supported by the terminal.--